DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 150 481 CG 012 140

AUTHOR Lazar, Billie S.
TITLE Creativity and Regression on the Rorschach.
PUB DATE Aug 77
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association (San Francisco, California, August 26-30, 1977)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Students; *Creative Thinking; *Creativity; Psychological Studies; Research Projects; *Self Concept; *Thought Processes
IDENTIFIERS *Regression; *Rorschach Test

ABSTRACT

This paper describes the results of a study to further test and replicate previous studies partially supporting Kris's view that creativity is a regression in the service of the ego. For this sample of 42 female art and business college students, it was predicted that (1) highly creative Ss (measured by the Torrance Tests) produce more, and more primitive drive and primary process thinking on the Rorschach (scored according to Holt's system) than less creative Ss, and (2) that no differences are found in ego control in the production of this material. Findings were that less creative Ss and art students produced more socialized drive and more socialized and primitive primary process thinking than highly creative Ss and business students, respectively; no difference was found in the production of primitive drive or in ego control. (Author/PFS)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED150481

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH EDUCATION & WELFARE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

American Psychological Association
San Francisco, California
August 1977

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Billie S. Lazar

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

CREATIVITY AND REGRESSION ON THE RORSCHACH

Billie S. Lazar

University of Illinois Medical Center

Kris viewed creativity as a "regression in the service of the ego" where id impulses and drives and primary process mechanisms of thinking emerge for a time-limited period, but the ego retains control.

Holt developed a system for scoring Rorschach responses according to the emergence of libidinal or aggressive drive content and primary process thought mechanisms such as condensation, displacement, symbolism, or contradiction as well as to the effectiveness of the ego in maintaining defenses and controls in the production of this material.

Pine's study of male college students, and Rogolsky's study of third grade children, suggested that creativity was related positively to ego control scores on the Rorschach, and that creativity and the emergence of drive dominated or primary process thinking were not related.

In contrast to results for male students, Pine found that for female students, creativity and amount of drive material and primary process thinking used on the Rorschach were related positively; no relationship was obtained between creativity and ego control scores. Perhaps less creative women defend themselves against the uncontrolled emergence of drive dominated and primary process thinking, and produce limited amounts of this material which are

CG012140

under ego control. Studies by Getzels, Holt, and von Holt also suggested a positive relationship between creativity and the use of drive dominated and primary process thinking. Dudek found that artists express primitive material which "non-artists" repress.

The present study attempted to further test Kris's assumption and to replicate previous studies. In this sample of female subjects, the predictions were that 1)highly creative subjects produce a)more, and b)more primitive drive dominated and primary process thinking than less creative subjects, and 2)highly creative subjects and less creative subjects do not differ in ego control in the production of this material.

Creativity was measured by the Torrance Tests of Creativity Thinking Ability, Figural Tests Form A. These tests consist of Picture Construction, which requires the subject to attach a pear-shaped piece of green paper to a white page and make it into a picture; Incomplete Figures, where the subject is presented with ten incomplete figures or lines and told to make each one into a picture, and Repeated Figures, where the subject makes objects or pictures from 30 pairs of parallel lines. Drive dominated thinking, primary process thinking, and ego control were assessed by the Holt system for scoring Rorschach responses.

Subjects

Forty-two female college students, ages 18 to 29, were selected from art and business students to maximize the chances of obtaining the entire range of the Torrance Tests. The assumption was that art students would score in the middle to upper range, and that business students would score in the middle to lower range. Subjects were recruited through teachers and other students, by personal contact, and by telephoning at random from student directories.

Procedure

Subjects were tested individually in one 1½ to 3 hour session, and told that "this is a study concerning how people approach tasks or the style with which they do things" to avoid focusing on creativity, which might tend to increase the number of "unusual" and possibly drive dominated and primary process thinking responses. The order of administration of instruments was the same for all subjects: Subject Identification Form, WAIS Information subtest, Rorschach test, Torrance Tests, and testing-the-limits on the Rorschach. The WAIS and the Torrance Tests were administered according to the standard instructions. The Rorschach was administered in the manner suggested by Holt, with the inquiry after each card instead of at the end of the entire association phase and with an "affect inquiry"where the examiner asked how the subject feels about having seen each response.

Results

Rorschach responses were scored for the number of libidinal and aggressive drive responses and responses containing primary process modes of thinking as well as for the social appropriateness of this material according to whether responses were more primitive or more socialized. Libidinal drive content included responses referring to oral, oral-aggressive, anal, sexual, exhibitionistic-voyeuristic, and homosexual content. Primary process modes of thinking included condensation, displacement, symbolism, contradiction, distortions, and peculiar verbalizations. "Kissing" is an example of socialized drive dominated thinking, and "sexual intercourse" is an example of primitive drive dominated thinking. "The bow gives a feminine touch" is an instance of "conventional image symbolism" which is an example of socialized primary process thinking, and "two men drunk over a punch bowl, the red tie represents gaiety" is an instance of "idiosyncratic image symbolism" which is an example of primitive primary process thinking.

In addition, Rorschach responses were scored for ego control in the production of drive dominated thinking and primary process thinking. A Defense Effectiveness score which is based on form level, controls and defenses, and affect, is a measure of the success with which one controls the expression of impulses and prelogical material.

Each of the three Torrance Tests was scored for originality, a measure of novelty and for elaboration, a measure of the number of different details used in the construction of each picture. In addition, Incomplete Figures and Repeated Figures were scored for fluency, a measure of the number of figures drawn, and for flexibility, a measure of the number of different kinds of things drawn. A Total Creativity Index was obtained in the manner suggested by Torrance: adding the scores for each test, converting these sums to T-scores, and adding the T-scores for the three tests.

Refer to Table 1. Art and business students did not differ in age, intelligence, individual creativity measures, or in the Total Creativity Index, although the minimum and maximum scores for art students, were higher, respectively, than the minimum and maximum scores for business students. Although a wide range of scores was obtained on the Torrance Tests, our rationale for using art students and business students was not a valid one.

Art students were more productive than business students in the total number of Rorschach responses, in the number of drive dominated and primary process thinking responses, in the number of socialized drive dominated thinking responses, and in the number of socialized and primitive primary process thinking responses. No differences were found in the number of primitive drive

dominated thinking responses. These results only partially replicated Dudek's findings.

Refer to Table 2. The prediction that highly creative subjects produce more, and more primitive drive dominated and primary process thinking responses than less creative subjects was not supported. Less creative subjects were more productive than highly creative subjects for total number of Rorschach responses, socialized and primitive primary process thinking responses, drive dominated thinking responses, and socialized drive dominated thinking responses. No differences were found for primitive drive dominated thinking responses and for "neutral" or non-drive dominated, secondary process thinking responses.

The prediction that highly creative subjects and less creative subjects do not differ in ego control was supported. However, because the first prediction was not supported, the rationale for this assumption was not valid.

Discussion

Results of this study did not support, and actually contradicted Kris's theory and the results of previous studies. We may speculate on the reasons for these results to suggest directions for future research.

The Holt scoring system has two difficulties which might be overcome by further revision. First, in this essentially normal sample, a narrow range of ego control

scores was obtained; this measure appeared to be truncated artificially at the upper limit so that the quality of the drive dominated and primary process thinking was not differentiated, and the second prediction was not adequately tested. Second, drive dominated and primary process thinking reflect Holt's views of social appropriateness. Cultural changes concerning what is socially appropriate have occurred since the previous studies were conducted. Since creative people tend toward novelty and the unconventional, perhaps they were more likely to produce this type of thinking in the early 1960's when it was regarded as less socially appropriate than in the middle 1970's when these data were collected, and this type of thinking has become more commonplace.

These results are surprising because productivity is involved both in the creativity measures and in the production of drive dominated and primary process thinking. Perhaps the creative process involved in drawing differs from the processes involved in visually structuring inkblots and allowing drive dominated and primary process material to emerge into verbalizations. For future research, measures of creativity and measures of regression should be on the same task and should use the same modality, for example, visual, visual-motor, or verbal means of production.

That previous studies obtained varying results conerning the relationship between creativity and the Holt system

and that this study obtained results that contradicted previous studies suggests that perhaps the sample of subjects is an important variable. This sample was unusual in some respects. Most of the subjects were students at a noted university. The business students were women who were minorities in programs consisting primarily of men; for example, one program had approximately 50 women to approximately 500 men. Perhaps the business students were as creative as the art students because creativity may be an associated characteristic of women in primarily male programs.

Kris's theory appears to require modification because the results of empirical tests are highly dependent on the samples used. Our original explanation of Pine's results, that less creative women defend themselves against the uncontrolled emergence of drive dominated and primary process thinking, and produce limited amounts of this material which are under ego control might well be applied to the highly creative subjects of this sample. In this sample, the emergence of this type of thinking into verbalizations does not enhance creativity, but rather seems to impair it. That creativity is associated with the emergence of drive dominated and primary process thinking in some samples but not in others suggests that perhaps creativity is not a regression in the service of the ego, but that intervening personality or social variables may exist which require further investigation.

TABLE 1

ART STUDENTS AND BUSINESS STUDENTS

	Measure	Art Students[a] Mean	S.D.	Range	Business Students Mean	S.D.	Range	t
	Age(Years)	22.7	2.9	18- 29	23.2[b]	2.1	20- 27	-0.535
	WAIS IQ	125.3	10.7	106-148	125.5	9.9	106-148	-0.073
Torrance Tests	Fluency	20.7	5.1	14- 34	22.6	6.0	5- 30	-1.082
	Flexibility	16.0	4.4	9- 25	18.6	4.6	5- 25	-1.819
	Originality	37.3	11.4	19- 60	33.1	9.8	7- 44	1.251
	Elaboration	142.4	49.6	78-267	116.4	41.1	28-197	1.804
	TCI	200.2	27.1	147-255	200.8	33.4	97-243	-0.059
Rorschach	Total R	38.7	14.5		26.3	14.1		2.712**
	Neutral R	12.3	7.8		9.5	4.9		1.343
	Drive	20.6	8.6		13.4	8.3		2.661*
	Primitive	2.2	2.0		1.5	2.1		1.173
	Socialized	19.2	8.2		12.3	7.5		2.744**
	Primary Proc	15.1	7.4		7.9	6.8		3.231**
	Primitive	6.0	4.2		3.1	3.6		2.335*
	Socialized	11.6	5.7		5.7	4.8		3.548**
	Libidinal	9.8	5.6		6.1	4.3		2.288*
	Primitive	1.9	1.9		1.3	2.1		0.892
	Socialized	8.3	5.2		5.0	3.2		2.466*
	Aggressive	13.3	6.5		9.2	6.1		2.049*
	Primitive	0.4	0.6		0.1	0.5		1.327
	Socialized	13.2	6.5		9.2	6.1		2.004

[a] N=21 for Art Students and N=21 for Business Students unless otherwise noted.

[b] N=20

*p<.05. **p<.01.

TABLE 2

HIGHLY CREATIVE AND LESS CREATIVE SUBJECTS

	Productivity (R)					Ego Control (DE)				
Creativity (TCI)	Low[a]		High			Low		High		
Rorschach Response	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	t	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	t
Total R	39.0	16.3	26.0	11.6	2.915**	0.83	0.20	0.84	0.24	-0.153
Neutral R	12.4	7.2	9.4	5.7	1.441	0.82	0.26	0.79	0.42	0.269
Drive	21.1	8.8	12.9	7.6	3.140**	0.84	0.24	0.87	0.41	-0.249
Primitive	2.4	2.0	1.3	2.0	1.799	0.58	0.89	0.54	0.42	0.112
Socialized	19.6	8.6	12.0	6.7	3.119**	0.84	0.24	0.85	0.26	-0.036
Primary Process	14.7	8.3	8.4	6.1	2.720**	0.84	0.20	0.84	0.25	-0.013
Primitive	6.0	4.7	3.0	3.0	2.423*	0.64	0.68	0.79	0.56	-0.724
Socialized	11.0	6.1	6.3	5.0	2.716**	0.82	0.36	0.84	0.42	-0.179
Libidinal	9.8	5.8	6.1	4.0	2.357*	0.94	0.47	0.75	0.45	1.273
Primitive	2.0	2.1	1.2	1.9	1.198	0.68	0.71	0.55	0.43	0.494
Socialized	8.2	5.3	5.1	3.1	2.230*	1.02	0.43	0.80	0.49	1.468
Aggressive	14.1	6.6	8.4	5.4	3.012**	0.77	0.25	0.80	0.33	-0.400
Primitive	0.5	0.7	0.0	0.2	2.516*	0.64	0.68	0.79	0.56	-0.724
Socialized	14.0	6.6	8.4	5.3	2.963**	0.82	0.36	0.84	0.42	-0.179

[a]N=21 for less creative Ss and N=21 for highly creative Ss.

*$p<.05$. **$p<.01$.

References

Dudek, S. Z. The artist as a person. Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease, 1970, 150, 232-241.

Getzels, J. W. and Jackson, P. W. Creativity and intelligence. New York: Wiley, 1962.

Holt, R. R. Gauging primary and secondary process in Rorschach responses. Journal of Projective Techniques, 1956, 20, 14-25.

Holt, R. R. Measuring libidinal and aggressive motives and their controls by means of the Rorschach test. In D. Levine (Ed.), Nebraska Symposium on Motivation. University of Nebraska Press, 1966. Pp. 1-47.

Holt, R. R. Manual for the scoring of primary process manifestations in Rorschach responses. (10th ed.) New York: Research Center for Mental Health, New York University, 1970 (mimeographed).

Holt, R. R. and Havel, J. A. A method for assessing primary and secondary process in the Rorschach. In M. A. Rickers-Ovsiankina (Ed.), Rorschach psychology. New York: Wiley, 1960. Pp. 263-315.

Kris, E. Psychoanalytic explorations in art. New York: International Universities Press, 1952.

Pine, F. Creativity and primary process: Sample variations. Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease, 1962, 134, 506-511.

Rogolsky, M. M. Artistic creativity and adaptive regression in third grade children. Journal of Projective Techniques and Personality Assessment, 1968, 32, 53-62.

Torrance, E. P. Torrance tests of creative thinking: Norms technical manual. (Research ed.) Princeton, New Jersey: Personnel Press, 1966a.

Torrance, E. P. Torrance tests of creative thinking: Directions manual and scoring guide: Figural test Booklet A. (Research ed.) Princeton, New Jersey: Personnel Press, 1966b.

von Holt, H. W. et al. Orality, image fusion, and concept-formation. Journal of Projective Techniques, 1960, 24, 194-198.

Wechsler, D. Manual for the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale. New York: Psychological Corporation, 1955.

Page 1
- Kris (1952)
- Holt (1956, 1966, 1970; Holt and Havel, 1960)
- Pine (1962)
- Rogolsky (1968)

Page 2
- Getzels (Getzels and Jackson, 1962)
- Holt (1966)
- von Holt (1960)
- Kris (1952)
- Torrance Tests (Torrance, 1966b)
- Holt system (Holt, 1970)

Page 3-
- WAIS (Wechsler, 1955)
- Torrance Tests (Torrance, 1966b)
- Holt (1970)

Page 5
- Torrance Tests (Torrance, 1966a)

Page 6
- Kris (1952)
- Holt (1970)